

Coastal Cape Baseball

Coaching Code of Conduct

Deciding to coach a youth sports team is an awesome responsibility. It requires a significant investment of time and energy that is often unseen and underappreciated. However, the rewards of guiding young athletes are immeasurable and the joy of coaching young athletes will most certainly have a lasting impact on you. To assist in your efforts and to ensure that we run the most efficient league possible, the following document emphasize three principles that should guide your coaching efforts:

Communication, Preparation, and Setting Expectations. We believe that by following the philosophy laid out here, you will ensure that your athletes have the most positive experience possible.

Principle 1. Communication

I. Players

- a. Coastal Cape Baseball expects coaches to communicate effectively with their players by considering the individual needs of each athlete and emphasizing the well-being of that athlete over the pressure to win.
- b. Coaches are expected to treat each athlete on their roster with the same dignity and respect as all other players, regardless of playing ability or any other complicating factor.
- c. Coaches should exhibit patience when teaching new skills and ensure that players are receiving adequate instruction when new aspects of the game are being introduced, especially to younger players.
- d. Whenever necessary, a coach should take appropriate steps to correct inappropriate behavior exhibited by a player.
- e. Egregious or unruly conduct by players should be discussed with player, his/her parents, and the Executive Director of the league.

II. Parents

- a. Coaches are expected to consistently communicate with the parents of their players about all matters related to the team. These include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Practice schedule, game schedule, schedule changes, team dynamics, preparedness, conduct while observing practice/games, and their expectations for parent involvement, e.g. volunteer opportunities, post-game food, activities, etc.
- b. It is *highly* suggested that each coach maintains a 'group text' or 'group email' with all parents as a forum for such communication.
- c. Coaches should provide information about the time and place of all team activities in a timely manner.
- d. When appropriate, coaches should be sure involve parents in any discussions about behavioral issues related to their child's conduct during team activities.
- e. Whenever a coach feels that additional support is needed in relation to parent concerns, he or she should escalate the matter to Executive Director, who will promptly intervene.

III. Umpires

- a. Coaches shall treat umpires of the game with the utmost respect.
- b. Coaches shall ensure that their players treat umpires with the utmost respect.
- c. Disagreements between coaches and umpires are a natural part of baseball, but at the youth level, the expectation is to always respect for the decisions made by umpires and to ensure that players do the same.
- d. **Given that players often model their behavior towards umpires on what they see from their coach, inappropriate conduct towards umpires by a coach or a player on his or her team may result in disciplinary action by league officials. Particularly malicious conduct could result in suspension from duties or dismissal from a coaching position.**
- e. **Assistant Coaches are an extension of the Head Coach. As such, it is the responsibility of the head coach to ensure that his or her assistants understand the importance of treating umpires with respect.**

IV. Opposing Coaches

- a. Coaches should engage in a respectful dialogue with opposing coaches prior to and during each game.
- b. Respect between opposing coaches fosters respect amongst the players on opposing teams.

V. Opposing Players

- a. Coaches are expected to refrain from any communication with players on opposing teams except that which is positive, encouraging, supportive, and nurturing.
- b. Under no circumstances should a coach engage an opposing player in any manner that can be construed as demeaning, harassing, taunting, hostile or otherwise negative.
- c. If a coach finds him or herself in a position where, in the opinion of the coach, an opposing player is conducting him or herself in a manner that harms the coach's team or players, the coach should engage the umpire an/or opposing coach in a dialogue to review and resolve the issue. The coach should not attempt to intervene with that opposing player (see expectation 1.V.b.).

VI. Fans

- a. At all times, coaches should maintain positive interactions with fans attending the game.
- b. Whenever possible, the coach should encourage fans of his/her team to treat the players, coaches, umpires, and opposing fans with respect.
- c. If the coach feels that a fan is acting inappropriately, he or she should point out the offensive behavior to the umpire. The coach should not attempt to intervene on his or her own.

VII. League Officials

- a. Coaches should understand that League officials, including the Executive Directors of each division and members of the Board of Directors are available to support their efforts and are encouraged to utilize those resources whenever necessary and or/appropriate.

- b. Coaches should also understand that league officials will regularly monitor the activities of coaches. This may take many forms and is meant to be supportive and encouraging.
 - i. In cases where league officials observe conduct by coaches that is contrary to league values or when reports of such behavior are brought to the attention of league officials by other parties, coaches should expect that league officials will engage them in conversations about such actions and determine appropriate measures to correct the actions.
 - ii. **Continued violations of the Coaches Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action from league officials.**

Principle 2. Preparation

I. Practices

- a. Coaches are expected to arrive at each practice with a full practice plan that maximizes the use of time on the field. A written practice plan is most effective.
- b. Coaches are expected to inform their assistants of practices plans, stations, expectations, exercises, and activities *prior to the practice*.

II. Games

- a. Coaches should arrive well ahead of the game to ensure that the field is properly prepared – lined, raked, dugouts cleaned, and any other necessary preparations.
- b. While it is understood that the flow of the game or a pre-game adjustment may necessitate changes, it is expected that coaches will arrive with their lineup prepared, positions decided, and pitch count expectations set. In other words, games should be well-managed and not decided “on-the-fly.”
- c. Game scores should be reported promptly.
- d. Any concerns that arise after the game should be forwarded to the Executive Director to manage.

Principle 3. Setting Expectations

I. Players

- a. Coaches should set expectations for their team and players prior to stepping on to the field by clearly outlining how players on their team should conduct themselves. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - i. Proper practice attire and gear
 - ii. Player etiquette – towards coaches, teammates, opponents, umpires, fans, and anyone else they may encounter while representing their team.
 - iii. Playing time and positions
 - iv. Effort and hustle in practice and games
- b. Coaches should regularly check-in with their players to let them know if they are meeting expectations and, if not, how they can improve.

II. Parents

- a. Coaches should set firm expectations with the parents of their players by ensuring that they are aware of what is expected of their child and what is expected of them (see 1.I.a-e).

III. Assistants

- a.** To ensure the most efficient use of practice time, coaches should communicate effectively with their assistants about any assignments, drills, plans, or stations before practice begins.
- b.** Head coaches should ensure that assistant coaches understand their roles and responsibilities during games and be certain that those coaches are able to carry out those duties.

Ultimately, the goal of youth sports is to ensure a positive experience for the athlete, instill in players a lifelong goal of healthy activity and competition, and to help young men and women become better athletes, teammates, and people. Coaches play a central role in this process and by keeping the above principles in mind, you can truly have a lasting impact on the lives of the young athletes under your care during the season. And for that, we thank you for your commitment, time, energy, and overall dedication to the youth of the Lower Cape.

By signing this document, you acknowledge that you understand and accept it.

Coaches Signature